

he would say OK. Then he would take them back and get them altered. If Dad noticed afterwards, he'd swear blind they were what he'd agreed.'

'I was very worried he'd turn out a Teddy Boy,' says Jim. 'I had a dread of that. I said over and over again that he wasn't going to have tight trousers. But he just wore me down. His hair was always long as well, even then. He'd come back from the barber's and it would just look the same and I'd say, "Was it closed, then?"'

Paul was just as interested in girls as the guitar. 'I got it for the first time at 15. I suppose that was a bit early to get it. I was about the first in my class. She was older and bigger than me. It was at her house. She was supposed to be babysitting while her mum was out. I told everybody at school next day, of course. I was a real squealer.'

Paul remembers vividly that day in the summer of 1957 when Ivan mentioned that he was going to Woolton Parish Church to see this group he sometimes played with, though he wasn't actually playing with them that day. Paul said yes, he'd come along and see them. Might be a few girls to pick up.

'They weren't bad,' says Paul. 'John played the lead guitar. But he played it like a banjo, with banjo chords, as that was all he knew.'

'None of the others had even as much idea as John how to play. They were mostly just strumming along.'

'They played things like "Maggie May", but with the words a bit different. John had done them up himself as he didn't know them all.'

'They were playing outdoors in a big field. John was staring round as he was playing, watching everybody. He told me afterwards that it was the first time he tried sussing an audience, you know, sizing them up, seeing whether it was best to twist a shoulder at them, or best not to move at all.'

'I was in my white sports coat and black drainies, as usual. I'd just got them narrowed again during the dinner-hour from school. They were so narrow they knocked everybody out.'

'I went round to see them afterwards in the Church Hall place. I talked to them, just chatting and showing off. I showed them how to play "Twenty Flight Rock" and told them all the words. They didn't know it. Then I did "Be Bop A Lula" which they didn't know properly either. Then I did my Little Richard bit, went through me whole repertoire in fact. I remember this beery old man getting nearer and breathing down me neck as I was playing. "What's this old drunk doing?" I thought. Then he said "Twenty Flight Rock" was one of his favourites. So I knew he was a connoisseur.

'It was John. He'd just had a few beers. He was 16 and I was only 14, so he was a big man. I showed him a few more chords he didn't know. Ian James had taught me them really. Then I left. I felt I'd made an impression, shown them how good I was.'

Pete Shotton, however, doesn't recall Paul making any big impression. Pete, being completely unmusical, was a bit harder to impress by 'Twenty Flight Rock', however brilliantly executed.

'I didn't really take in Paul that first meeting,' says Pete. 'He seemed very quiet, but you do when you meet a group of new blokes for the first time. I wasn't really jealous of him, not at first. He was so much younger than us. I didn't think he was going to be a rival. Me and John were still the closest pals. I was always John's friend. I loved him, that's why.'

John remembers mulling over the meeting with Paul in his mind afterwards, before he decided on anything. This was unusual for him, to think things out instead of barging on with whatever he wanted.

'It was with being pissed,' says John. 'It must have slowed me up.

'I was very impressed by Paul playing "Twenty Flight Rock". He could obviously play the guitar. I half thought to myself – he's as good as me. I'd been kingpin up to then. Now, I thought, if I take him on, what will happen? It went through my head that I'd have to keep him in line, if I let him join. But he was good, so he was worth having. He also looked like Elvis. I dug him.'

About a week later Paul went over to Menlove Avenue on his bike to see Ivan. He cycled up through the golf course from Allerton. On his way back

he met Pete Shotton. 'Pete said they'd been talking about me. Did I want to join their group? I said OK, right.'

Paul's first public performance, as a member of the Quarrymen, was at a dance at the Conservative Club in Broadway. Paul was going to do his own little solo bit that evening, probably 'Twenty Flight Rock', but something happened and he didn't.

But later on, after the dance, he played a couple of tunes to John he had written himself. Since he'd started playing the guitar, he had tried to make up a few of his own little tunes. The first tune he played to John that evening was called 'I Lost My Little Girl'. Not to be outdone, John immediately started making up his own tunes. He had been elaborating and adapting other people's words and tunes to his own devices for some time, but he hadn't written down proper tunes till Paul appeared with his. Not that Paul's tunes meant much, nor John's. They were very simple and derivative. It was only them coming together, each egging the other on, which suddenly inspired them to write songs for themselves to play. From that day, they never stopped.

'I went off in a completely new direction from then on,' says Paul. 'Once I got to know John it all changed. He was good to know. Even though he was two years older than me and I was just a baby, we thought the same sort of things.'

What happened in the subsequent months was that John and Paul got to know each other. They spent all their time together. They both stayed away from school and went to Paul's house, while his dad was out at work, and ate fried eggs and practised guitar chords. Paul showed John all the ones he knew. John's banjo chords, taught to him by Julia, were obviously useless. As Paul is left-handed, after he had shown John what to do, John had to go home and do it in the mirror on his own, then get it the right way round.

Pete Shotton began to feel a bit out of it. 'My days with the group soon came to an end,' says Pete. 'We were playing at someone's party in Smithdown Lane. It was a right piss-up really. John and I got hilarious, laughing like mad at each other's jokes. Then he broke my washboard over my head. I lay there, in tears, with it framed round my neck. It wasn't the

life for me any more, playing in a group. Apart from feeling no good, I didn't like standing up there. I was too embarrassed.'

Ivan Vaughan had long since left the group, though he was still a friend, of John's at home and of Paul's at school.

Paul began to think more and more of the possibility of a great friend of his from his school joining the group. This friend had taken up skiffle and rock and Elvis about the same time, but was coming on even better than most people. Paul thought he would bring him along to see John. He was even younger than Paul, but he didn't think that would matter, as he was so good.

Ivan Vaughan was annoyed when he did. Ivan had taken along first of all Len Garry and then Paul McCartney from the Institute to meet John. He looked upon the procuring as his prerogative. He didn't like the idea of Paul taking someone else along.

This new friend was not just much younger, he didn't even make any pretence at being an intellectual, the way Paul did. George Harrison, as the friend was called, was a real out-and-out Teddy Boy. Ivan couldn't understand why the Quarrymen should be interested in him.



suppose I was impressed by all the Art College crowd. John was very sarcastic, always trying to bring you down, but I either took no notice or gave him the same back, and it worked.'

'Meeting Paul was just like two people meeting,' says John. 'Not falling in love or anything. Just us. It went on. It worked. Now there were three of us who thought the same.'

There were still other members of the Quarrymen who came and went, either because they couldn't put up with John's tongue or got bored. They needed other people, when they got their occasional dates, as three guitars don't make a group, even in those days. They desperately needed a drummer but no one they picked up, however useless, ever seemed to stay.

They were moving out of the skiffle era as a group. Tea chests and washboards were just a bit amateurish. All of them anyway preferred rock'n'roll and Elvis in particular and this was the style they were trying to copy, listening to new records on the radio and trying to reproduce the same chords or sounds at home.

John, as the leader, tried to get bookings from all the little one-man managements who were cashing in on the group craze. But he was finding it very difficult to get regular bookings. There were so many groups, and most of them were far better than the Quarrymen.

But they now had two homes to go to – George's almost any time they liked, and Paul's, especially when his dad was out – where they could practise, write music or just draw and mess around. But Mimi was certainly not going to have any Teddy Boys from a rock group coming to her house.

'Paul used to come to my front door,' says Mimi. 'He'd lean his bike against the fence and look over at me with his sheep eyes and say "Hello, Mimi. Can I come in?" "No, you certainly cannot," I'd say.'

Mimi wasn't very keen on George, when she first heard about him.

'John used to go on and on about George, what a nice boy he was and how I'd like him. He went to great lengths to impress me with George. "Give you anything, George," he'd say.

time he stayed there. He wrote long 30-page letters to John, did endless drawings and paintings or just walked round and round his room. He had violent headaches and temper tantrums which made it difficult for Astrid and her mother to look after him. He did have medical treatment, but nothing seemed to help. 'He came back from a specialist one day and said he didn't want a black coffin like everyone else. He'd just seen a white coffin in a window and he wanted that.'

Stu died in April 1962 after a brain haemorrhage. 'He lived so much in such a short time,' says Klaus. 'Every second of his short time he was doing something. He saw ten times more than other people. His imagination was fantastic. His death was a tragedy. He would have done so much.'

There is no doubt about Stu's artistic talent. Professor Paolozzi thought he was obviously destined to succeed. He had won prizes in Liverpool at an early age. Since his death, his paintings have appeared in numerous exhibitions in Liverpool and London. He had had a great influence on John and the rest of the Beatles, leading their fashion in hair, clothes and in thoughts.

'I looked up to Stu,' says John. 'I depended on him to tell me the truth, the way I do with Paul today. Stu would tell me if something was good and I'd believe him.'

Even today, they still miss him. It's strange to think that by 1962, the one who was looked upon as the cleverest Beatle had died.

The death of Stu was in a way a macabre climax to their year of apparently getting nowhere and feeling depressed. But back in Liverpool, just before Stu collapsed, the something John was looking for was at last about to happen.

It happened, just to be precise, at three o'clock on the afternoon of 28 October 1961. A youth in a black leather jacket called Raymond Jones walked into the NEMS record store in Whitechapel, Liverpool, and asked for a record called 'My Bonnie' by a group called the Beatles. Brian Epstein, who was behind the counter, said he was terribly sorry. He'd never heard of that record, nor of a group called the Beatles.

'For a long time we didn't know what else you could do. We were just lads down from the North being allowed to make music in the big EMI studios. It was all done very quickly, in one go, on one track, as "Love Me Do" was. We used to do "Love Me Do" better on stage than we did on the record.'

Their first LP, *Please Please Me*, took just one day to record and cost £400. *Sergeant Pepper* took four months and cost £25,000.

Today, now that they have stopped touring, their recording sessions are long and highly complicated.

'Now that we only play in the studios, and not anywhere else,' says George, 'we haven't got a clue about what we're going to do. We have to start from scratch, thrashing it out in the studio, doing it the hard way. If Paul has written a song, he comes into the studio with it in his head. It's very hard for him to give it to us and for us to get it. When we suggest something, it might not be what he wants because he hasn't got it in his head. So it takes a long time. Nobody knows what the tunes sound like till we've recorded them, then listened to them afterwards,'

Nobody knows either how tunes come into their heads in the first place. They don't know, or can't remember, how and why they did something. Cross-examining them, unless it is very recent, is impossible, because it's all gone. The only way is to be there, except that with this method you still can't see into their heads, but only what is coming out.

'A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS'

In March 1967 they were getting towards the end of the *Sergeant Pepper* album. They were halfway through a song for Ringo, a Ringo sort of song, which they'd begun the day before.

At two o'clock in the afternoon John arrived at Paul's house in St John's Wood. They both went up to Paul's work room at the top of the house. It is a narrow, rectangular room, full of stereophonic equipment and amplifiers. There is a large triptych of Jane Asher on the wall and a large silver piece of sculpture by Paolozzi, shaped like a fireplace with Dalek heads on top.

John started playing his guitar and Paul started banging on the piano. For a couple of hours, they both banged away. Each of them seemed to be in a trance till the other came up with something good and he would pluck it out of a mass of noises and try it himself.

They'd already got the tune the previous afternoon, a gentle lilting tune, and its name, 'A Little Help From My Friends'. Now they were trying to polish up the melody and think of some words to go with it.

'*Are you afraid when you turn out the light*,' sang John. Paul sang it after him and nodded. John said they could use that idea for all the verses, if they could think of some more questions on those lines.

'*Do you believe in love at first sight*,' sang John. 'No,' he said, stopping singing. 'It hasn't got the right number of syllables. What do you think? Can we split it up and have a pause to give it an extra syllable?'

John then sang the line, breaking it in the middle: '*Do you believe – ugh – in love at first sight*.'

'How about,' said Paul, '*Do you believe in a love at first sight*.'

John sang it over and accepted it. In singing it, he added the next line, '*Yes, I'm certain it happens all the time*.'

They both then sang the two lines to themselves, la-la-ing all the other lines. Apart from this, all they'd got was the chorus. '*I'll get by with a little help from my friends*.' John found himself singing '*Would you believe*,' which he thought was better.

Then they changed the order round, singing the two lines '*Would you believe in a love at first sight Yes, I'm certain it happens all the time*', before going on to '*Are you afraid when you turn out the light*', but they still had to la-la the fourth line, which they couldn't think of.

It was now about five o'clock. Cynthia, John's wife arrived, wearing sunglasses, accompanied by Terry Doran, one of their (and Brian Epstein's) old Liverpool friends. John and Paul kept on playing. Cyn picked up a paperback book and started reading. Terry produced a magazine about horoscopes.

John and Paul were singing their three lines over and over again, searching for a fourth.

'What's a rhyme for time?' said John. 'Yes, *I'm certain it happens all the time*. It's got to rhyme with that line.'

'How about, "I just feel fine",' suggested Cyn.

'No,' said John. 'You never use the word just. It's meaningless. It's a fill-in word.'

John sang 'I *know it's mine*' but nobody took much notice. It didn't make much sense, coming after 'Are you afraid when you turn out the light'. Somebody said it sounded obscene.

Terry asked what my birthday was. I said 7 January. Paul stopped playing, although it had looked as if he was completely concentrating on the song, and said, 'Heh, that's our kid's birthday as well.' He listened while Terry read out the horoscope. Then he went back to doodling on the piano.

In the middle of the doodling, Paul suddenly started to play 'Can't Buy Me Love'. John joined in, singing it very loudly, laughing and shouting. Then Paul began another song on the piano, 'Tequila'. They both joined in again, shouting and laughing even louder. Terry and Cyn went on reading.

'Remember in Germany,' said John. 'We used to shout out anything.'

They played the song again. This time John shouted out different things in each pause in the music. 'Knickers' and 'Duke of Edinburgh' and 'tit' and 'Hitler'.

They both stopped all the shouting and larking around, as suddenly as they'd begun it. They went back, very quietly, to the song they were supposed to be working on. '*What do you see when you turn out the light*,' sang John, trying slightly new words to their existing line, missing out 'afraid'. Then he followed it with another line, 'I *can't tell you, but I know it's mine*.' By slightly rewording it, he'd made it fit in.

Paul said yes, that would do. He wrote down the finished four lines on a sheet of exercise paper propped up in front of him on his piano. They now

had one whole verse, as well as the chorus. Paul got up and wandered round the room. John moved to the piano.

'How about a piece of amazing cake from Basingstoke,' said Paul, taking down a piece of rock-hard cake from a shelf. 'It'll do for a trifle,' said John. Paul made a face. Terry and Cynthia were still quietly reading.

Paul got a sitar from a corner and sat down and started to tune it, shushing John to keep quiet for a minute. John sat still at the piano, looking blankly out of the window.

Outside in the front courtyard of Paul's house, the eyes and foreheads of six girls could just be seen peering over the front wall. Then the girls dropped, exhausted, on to the pavement beyond. A few minutes later they appeared again, hanging on till their strength gave way. John peered vacantly into space through his round, wire spectacles. Then he began to play a hymn on the piano, singing words that he made up as he went along.

'Backs to the wall, if you want to see His Face.'

Then he seemed to jump in the air and started banging out a hearty rugby song. 'Let's write a rugby song, eh.' No one listened to him.

Paul had got his sitar tuned and was playing some notes on it, the same ones over and over again. He got up again and wandered round the room. John picked up the sitar this time, but he couldn't get comfortable with it. Paul told him that he had to sit on the floor with his legs crossed and place it in the bowl of his foot. Paul said that George did it that way; it felt uncomfortable at first, but after a few centuries you got used to it. John tried it, then gave up and placed it against a chair.

'Heh,' said John to Terry, 'did you get to the place?'

'Yeh, I got you three coats, like George's.'

'Great,' said John, very excited. 'Where are they then?'

'I paid by cheque and they wouldn't let me have them till tomorrow.'

'Oh,' said John. 'Couldn't you have said who they were for? You should have said they were for Godfrey Winn. I want them now.'

'They'll be OK tomorrow,' said Paul. 'There's some more stuff to get tomorrow. Don't worry.'

Paul then went back to his guitar and started to sing and play a very slow, beautiful song about a foolish man sitting on the hill. John listened to it quietly, staring blankly out of the window, almost as if he wasn't listening. Paul sang it many times, la-la-ing words he hadn't thought of yet. When at last he finished, John said he'd better write the words down or he'd forget them. Paul said it was OK. He wouldn't forget them. It was the first time Paul had played it for John. There was no discussion.

It was getting near seven o'clock, almost time to go round the corner to the EMI recording studios. They decided to ring Ringo, to tell him his song was finished – which it wasn't – and that they would record it that evening. John picked up the phone. After a lot of playing around, he finally got through, but it was engaged. 'If I hold on, does that mean I eventually get through?'

'No, you have to hang up,' said Paul.

'IT'S GETTING BETTER'

Another afternoon – it was the first afternoon of spring – and Paul went for a walk with his dog Martha. John still hadn't arrived for their latest recording work on *Sergeant Pepper*.

He pushed Martha into his Aston Martin and got in beside her and started the car, but it wouldn't start. He gave it a few bangs, hoping that would do it, then he gave up and got out of the Aston Martin and into his black-windowed Mini Cooper. He revved up first time. His housekeeper opened the large black doors and he shot through, catching all the fans by surprise. He was away before they realized he'd come out.

He drove to Primrose Hill, where he parked the car and left it, without locking it. He never locks his cars.

Martha ran around and the sun came out. Paul thought it really was spring at last. 'It's getting better,' he said to himself.

He meant the weather, but the phrase made him smile because it was one of Jimmy Nichols's phrases, one which they used to mock all the time in Australia.

When Ringo was once ill and unable to play, Jimmy Nichols deputised for him on part of their Australian tour. Every time one of them asked Jimmy how he was getting on, if he was liking it and was he managing OK, all he ever replied was 'It's getting better.'

That day at two o'clock, when John came round to write a new song, Paul suggested: 'Let's do a song called, "It's getting better".' So they got going, both playing, singing, improvising and messing around. When the tune was at last taking shape, Paul said, 'You've got to admit, it is getting better.'

'Did you say, "You've got to admit, it's getting better"?'

Then John sang that as well. So it went on till two in the morning. People came to see Paul, some by appointment. They were left waiting downstairs, reading, or were sent away. They stopped once for a meal, a quick fry-up.

The next evening, Paul and John went to the recording studio. Paul played the new song on the piano, la-la-ing the accompaniment or banging in tune to his words, to give the others an idea of what it sounded like. Ringo and George said they liked it, as did George Martin.

The first stage in the layer cake system that they now use in recording songs was to get the backing recorded on one track.

They discussed what the general sound would be like and what sort of instruments to use. They also chatted about other things. When they got bored, they went off and played on their own on any instruments lying around. There was an electronic piano in the corner of the studio, left over from someone else's recording session. Someone doodled on it and it was decided to use it.

Ringo sat at his drums and played what he thought would be a good drum backing, with Paul singing the song to him in his ear. Because of the noise, Paul had to shout in Ringo's ear as he explained everything.

After about two hours of trying out little bits and pieces, they had the elements of a backing. George Martin and two studio technicians, who'd been sitting around just waiting up until then, went up into their sound-proof glass control room, where they continued to sit around and wait for the Beatles to get themselves organized.

Neil and Mal got the instruments and microphones arranged in one corner of the studio and the four of them at last started to sing and play, 'It's Getting Better'. Ringo looked a bit lost, sitting slightly apart on his own, surrounded by his drums. The other three had their heads together over one microphone.

They played the song over about ten times. All that was being recorded, up in the sound-proof box, were the instruments, not their voices. From time to time, Paul said 'Once more, let's try it this way,' or 'Let's have less bass, or more drums.' By midnight they had recorded the backing.

The next day John and George assembled at Paul's house. Ringo wasn't there. They were just going to do the singing track for 'It's Getting Better' and he wouldn't be needed. Ivan Vaughan, the schoolfriend of John and Paul, was also at Paul's house. At 7.30 they all moved round to EMI, where George Martin, like a very understanding housemaster, was ready and waiting for them.

The backing for 'It's Getting Better', which they'd recorded the night before, was played over and over again for them to listen to. George Harrison and Ivan went off to chat in a corner, but Paul and John listened carefully. Paul instructed the technician on which levers to press, telling him what he wanted, how it should be done, which bits he liked best. George Martin looked on, giving advice where necessary. John stared into space.

Dick James, their song publisher, arrived wearing a camel coat. He said hello to them all, very jolly and breezy. He made a joke about there being no truth in the rumour that EMI were buying Northern Songs.

He listened to the backing of 'It's Getting Better' and showed no expression. Then they played him one of their other songs, about a girl

leaving home. George Martin said this was the one that almost made him cry. Dick James listened and said yes, it was very good. He could do with more of them. 'You mean you don't like the freak-out stuff?' Dick James said no, no, he didn't mean that. Then he left.

They played the backing track of 'It's Getting Better' for what seemed like the hundredth time, but Paul said he wasn't happy about it. They'd better get Ringo in and they would do it all again. Someone went to ring for Ringo.

Peter Brown arrived. He'd just returned from a trip to America. He gave them some new American LPs which they all jumped upon. They played him 'She's Leaving Home' and a few other of the *Sergeant Pepper* songs, already recorded. Then they played him the backing track of 'It's Getting Better'. As it was being played, Paul talked to one of the technicians and told him to try yet a different sound mix. He did so, and Paul said that was much better. It would do. They didn't need to bring Ringo in now after all.

'And we've just ordered Ringo on toast,' said John. But Ringo was cancelled in time and the studio was got ready to record the sound track, the voices. As it was being set up by Neil, Mal brought in tea and orange juice drinks on a tray.

Paul let his tea go cold while he played with an oscillating box he found in a corner. By playing around with the switches, he managed to produce six different noises. He said to one of the sound engineers that if someone could produce oscillating boxes with the sounds controlled and in order, it would be a new electronic instrument.

They were ready at last. The three of them held their heads round one microphone and sang 'It's Getting Better' while, up in the control box, George Martin and his two assistants got it all down on track. The three Beatles were singing, not playing, but through headphones strapped to their ears they could hear the recording of the backing track. They were simply singing to their already recorded accompaniment.

In the studio itself, all that could be heard were the unaccompanied, un-electrified voices of the Beatles singing, without any backing. It all sounded flat and out of key.

They ran through the song about four times and John said he didn't feel well. He could do with some fresh air. Someone went to open the back door of the studio. There was the sound of loud banging and cheering on the other side. The door began to move slightly inwards, under the strain of a gang of fans who'd somehow managed to get inside the building.

George Martin came down from his box and told John he would be better to go up on the roof and get some air, rather than go outside.

'How's John?' Paul asked into the microphone to George Martin up in the control box.

'He's looking at the stars,' said George Martin.

'You mean Vince Hill?' said Paul. He and George started singing 'Edelweiss' and laughing. Then John came back.

In the corner of the studios, Mal and Neil and Ivan, the friend, couldn't hear the jokes over the headphones. They'd finished their tea. Ivan was writing a letter home to his mother. Neil was filling in his diary. He'd only started it two weeks previously. He said he should have started one about five years ago.

A man in a purple shirt called Norman arrived. He used to be one of their recording engineers and now had a group of his own. The Pink Floyd. Very politely he asked George Martin if his boys could possibly pop in to see the Beatles at work. George smiled, unhelpfully. Norman said perhaps he should ask John personally, as a favour. George Martin said no, that wouldn't work. But if by chance he and his boys popped in about eleven o'clock, he might just be able to see what he could do.

They did pop in, around 11.00, and exchanged a few halfhearted hellos. The Beatles were still going through the singing of 'It's Getting Better', for what now seemed the thousandth time. By two o'clock they'd got it at least to a stage which didn't make them unhappy.

'MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR'

The tune and all the words of 'It's Getting Better' had been worked out before they got into the recording studio but when they arrived at the EMI studios at 7.30 one evening to record 'Magical Mystery Tour' all they had was the title and a few bars of the music.

There was the usual crowd of fans waiting for them as they went in. Not screaming. Just quiet and contrite, like humble subjects, subdued by the presence. As they went in, one girl very shyly gave George a button badge which said 'George for PM'.

'Why would Paul McCartney want you?' said John to George.

Paul played the opening bars of 'Magical Mystery Tour' on the piano, showing the others how it would go. He gestured a lot with his hands and shouted 'Flash, Flash,' saying it would be like a commercial. John was wearing an orange cardigan, purple velvet trousers and a sporran. He opened the sporran and took out a cigarette, which he lit. Someone shouted that Anthony, John's chauffeur, wanted him on the phone.

They leaned round the piano while Paul was playing, going over and over the opening. Paul told Mal to write down the order of how they would do the song. In a very slow schoolboy hand, Mal wrote down the title and got ready for Paul's instructions. Paul said Trumpets, yes they'd have some trumpets at the beginning, a sort of fanfare, to go with 'Roll Up, Roll Up, for the Magical Mystery Tour.' Mal had better write that line down as well, as it was the only line they'd got. Paul told Mal to write down DAE, the first three chords of the song. Mal sucked his pencil, waiting for more of Paul's inspired words, but nothing came.

The instruments were then set up and they got ready to record the backing, which as usual was to be the first track they would do. John came back and asked Mal if he'd got in touch with Terry yet. Mal said he couldn't get through to him. John said it was his job to get through. Just keep on until he did.

It took a couple of hours to work out the first backing track and get it recorded. After it was done, Paul went up to see George Martin in the control room. Paul had the track played back to him, again, and again.

Below in the studio, while Paul got the technicians to do things upstairs, George got a set of crayons out of his painted sheepskin jacket and started to draw a picture. Ringo stared into space, smoking, looking very unhappy, which is his natural expression when he's not talking. John was at the piano, sometimes playing quietly, other times jumping up, pretending to be a spastic, or thumping out loud corny tunes. No one was watching him. He smiled fiendishly to himself through his spectacles, like a Japanese gnome. Neil was reading a pile of *Occult Weeklies*, which they'd all been thumbing through earlier in the evening. Mal had disappeared.

Paul was at last satisfied with the sound of the first track. He came back down and said he thought they could now add a few more things to it.

Mal reappeared carrying a big brown paper bag full of socks, all in bright colours. He passed the bag to John first. He grabbed it in great delight. He chose several pairs of orange terry towelling socks, then passed the bag round for the others to have a dip. The previous night he had said, just in passing, 'Socks, Mal.'

After the socks had been handed out, Paul asked Mal if he'd managed to get any real mystery tour posters. Mal said he had been round the bus stations all day looking for them. But he couldn't find any.

They had hoped that some real posters would have given them some ideas for the words of the song. Instead they all tried again to think of some good words, apart from Roll Up, Roll Up, which was still all they'd got.

As they shouted out ideas, Mal wrote them all down. 'Reservation', 'Invitation', 'Trip of a lifetime', 'Satisfaction guaranteed'. But they soon got fed up. They decided they would just sing any words that came into their heads, just to see what happened. So they did.

When they'd finished that, Paul decided that on the next track he would add a bit of bass to the backing. He put on the headphones, so that he could hear what they'd done so far, and strapped on his bass guitar. After that he said they should add even more instruments. All of them, Paul, Ringo, John, George, Neil and Mal, then picked up any old instruments that were lying around – maraccas, bells, tambourines. George Martin didn't play anything,

though he has done on many of their records. They all put on headphones and banged and played them to the music.

By two o'clock, they had recorded a basic backing, and had layered onto it a bass track, a lot of shouting and disjointed words, and some percussion instruments. 'Magical Mystery Tour' was then forgotten about for almost six months.

The Beatles do seem to record their music in apparent chaos. It is certainly an expensive trial-and-error method, making it all up as they go along. At one time, their songs were recorded at one go and on one track or at the most two. Now it takes at least four tracks, as they continually think of another instrument or effects to add. And when a 40-piece orchestra is used, as in 'A Day In The Life', the expense is enormous.

Listening to each stage of their recording, once they've done the first couple of tracks, it's often hard to see what they're still looking for, as it sounds so complete. Often the final complicated, well-layered versions seem to have drowned the initial simple melody. But they know it's not right, even if they can't put it into words. Their dedication is impressive, gnawing away at the same song for stretches of up to ten hours.

Paul often appears to be the leader in all this. This is mainly because someone has to say it's not good enough, let's do it once again. They all know it. But someone has to voice the instructions. Paul does it best, as he's still the keenest. But they all have a say in any big decisions. When it's John's song, he does most of the directing, and the same with George. George, most of all, is in complete charge of his own songs.

The recording of all their songs follows roughly the above pattern. But there is no pattern to the writing and creating of the songs in the first place. That can happen in many ways.

'The last four songs of an album are usually pure slog,' says Paul. 'If we need four more we just have to get down and do them. They're not necessarily worse than ones done out of imagination. They're often better, because by that stage in an LP we know what sort of songs we want.'

About a third of their songs are written like this, because they've got to write a song and can't wait for any sort of inspiration. John and Paul can do these slog songs on their own, but mostly they do them together, starting at two in the afternoon and giving themselves a day to complete it.

The rest of their songs owe something, even if it's very little, to inspiration of some kind. But even when an idea has suddenly come to them, they rarely sit down and work it all out. Very often they put it away at the back of their head till they need it. Even if they are in the process of doing an album, they still tend to bring out the song for the other one to hear, or bring it to the studio, still half finished. It's due to laziness as much as anything else. They want to get the others to help.

Paul's song 'Eleanor Rigby' came to him when he was looking at a shop window in Bristol and liked the name – Daisy Hawkins. Playing with the name in his head, it turned into a rhythm, and then into Eleanor Rigby. He saw the tune all through his head, but he still hadn't finished the words by the time it was recorded. The last verse was thought of by all of them, making suggestions at the last minute in the studio.

The only song either of them can think of that came straight out and was then recorded unaltered was John's 'Nowhere Man'. He's not particularly proud of it.

'I was just sitting, trying to think of a song, and I thought of myself sitting there, doing nothing and going nowhere. Once I'd thought of that, it was easy. It all came out. No, I remember now, I'd actually stopped trying to think of something. Nothing would come. I was cheesed off and went for a lie down, having given up. Then I thought of myself as Nowhere Man – sitting in his nowhere land.'

Very little inspiration comes simply out of the air. But a lot comes out of their immediate environment, past (like 'Penny Lane') or present ('Lovely Rita'). John, particularly, has taken many ideas from the media surrounding him at the time he's been looking for a song.

'Mr Kite was a straight lift. I had all the words staring me in the face one day when I was looking for a song.'

'It was from this old poster I'd bought at an antique shop. We'd been down in Surrey or somewhere filming a TV piece to go with 'Strawberry Fields For Ever'. There was a break and I went into this shop and bought an old poster advertising a variety show that starred Mr Kite.

'It said the Hendersons would also be there, late of Pablo Fanques Fair. There would be hoops and horses and someone going through a hogshead of real fire. Then there was Henry the Horse. The band would start at ten to six. All at Bishopsgate. Look, there's the bill, with Mr Kite topping it. I hardly made up a word, just connecting the lists together. Word for word really.

'I wasn't very proud of that. There was no real work. I was just going through the motions because we needed a new song for *Sergeant Pepper* at that moment.'

Almost the same sort of lifted inspiration caused what many people thought was their best song on the *Sergeant Pepper* LP, 'A Day In The Life'.

This was the one banned by the BBC on the grounds that it contained references to drugs – 'I'd love to turn you on.' Even John himself is quite pleased with this song.

Most of the words of the first section – the verses that begin with 'I read the news today, oh boy' – came from genuine pieces of news John was reading the day he wrote the song.

'I was writing the song with the *Daily Mail* propped up in front of me on the piano. I had it open at their News in Brief, or Far and Near, whatever they call it. There was a paragraph about 4,000 holes in Blackburn, Lancashire, being discovered. There was still a word missing in that verse when we came to record. I knew the line had to go "Now they know how many holes it takes to ... something, the Albert Hall." It was a nonsense verse really, but for some reason I couldn't think of the verb. What did the holes do to the Albert Hall?

'It was Terry who said "fill" the Albert Hall. And that was it. Perhaps I was looking for that word all the time, but couldn't put my tongue on it.

Other people don't necessarily *give* you a word or a line, they just throw in the word you're looking for anyway.'

The film mentioned in the song wasn't in the newspaper, but was a reference to his own film, which he'd just finished acting in – *How I Won The War*. The film is about the English army winning the war. It was originally a book.

'The lucky man who made the grade' in a car accident was based, rather indirectly, on the death of a friend of John's, and of all the Beatles – Tara Brown. Michael McCartney, Paul's brother, was a particularly close friend of his. There was a reference to his death in the paper on the day John was writing the song.

'I didn't copy the accident. Tara didn't blow his mind out. But it was in my mind when I was writing that verse.' Tara wasn't from the House of Lords either, but he was the son of a peer, Lord Oranmore and Browne, and a member of the Guinness family, which is the next best thing.

'Goodmorning, Goodmorning' was sparked off by listening to a cornflakes advertisement on TV. 'I often sit at the piano, working at songs, with the telly on low in the background. If I'm a bit low and not getting much done, then the words on the telly come through. That's when I heard Goodmorning, Goodmorning.'

Many times the first starting point of John's songs is a basic piece of rhythm, then words are fitted to it so that the rhythm, which originally consisted of only three or four notes, can be gone over and over and developed, either in his head or at the piano.

One day, down at his home in Weybridge John had just heard a police car going past in the distance with its siren shrieking. This consists of two notes, up and down, repeated over and over again, like a primitive wailing. The rhythm had stayed in his head and he was playing with putting words to it.

'Mis-ter, Ci-ty, p'lice-man, sit-tin, pre-tty.'

He'd got as far as trying the words in a slightly different order. '— Sitting pretty, like a policeman', but hadn't got much further. He said it would be a basis for a song, but there was no need to develop now. It could be dragged out next time he needed a song. 'I've written it down on a piece of paper somewhere. I'm always sure I'll forget it, so I write it down, but I wouldn't.'

He'd written down another few words that day, just daft words, to put to another bit of rhythm. 'Sitting on a cornflake, waiting for the man to come.' I thought he said 'van to come', which he hadn't, but he liked it better and said he'd use it instead.

He also had another piece of tune in his head. This had started from the phrase, 'sitting in an English country garden'. This is what he does for at least two hours every day, sitting on the step outside his window looking at his garden. This time, thinking about himself doing it, he'd repeated the phrase over and over again, till he'd put a tune to it.

'I don't know how it will all end up. Perhaps they'll turn out to be different parts of the same song — sitting in an English country garden, waiting for the van to come. I don't know.'

Which is what did happen. He put all the pieces together and made 'I Am The Walrus'. In the backing to the song can be heard the insistent rhythm of a police siren, which had sparked the song off in the first place. This very often happens. Bits of songs which have started off separately end up as the one song, when the time comes to empty his head and find a new song.

John is sparked off by rhythms, but more and more he is setting his own poetry, or often simply disconnected thoughts, to music. With Paul, the tune usually comes first. John woke up at seven o'clock one morning and couldn't get back to sleep. He found the words 'pools of sorrow, waves of joy' going through his head. He got up and wrote them out, writing about ten lines in all which eventually became 'Across the Universe'. In this first, early morning version, when he knew he was writing down some sloppy, corny phrases, just to get himself on to the next line, his handwriting got worse and more illegible, out of embarrassment, in case anyone should see lines he didn't like. This is what he did in his poems as a boy, or in letters to

Stu, trying to cover up his soft sentimental thoughts in case Mimi or anyone should read them.

He wasn't really pleased with the song in the end. He said it didn't come out as he'd heard it in his head. When they came back from India in April 1968 he decided to try to record it again, having thought of new ideas.

When John is talking to George Martin, on a John song, there is a lot of whooshing and wow wow wow, as he tries to let George Martin hear what he can hear in his head. He's also not as definite as Paul, or doesn't appear to be, asking the others what they think when they've just heard a track played back. Paul tends to say straight away, let's do it again.

'Heh Bulldog' was another John song which began simply with a set of words to which music was put. This is probably one of the quickest post-touring songs they've ever recorded. It was done, in February 1968, almost in a day, from start to finish. They had to come into the studio one Sunday to be filmed for a three-minute promotional film to go with 'Lady Madonna', Paul's song, the A side of their single in March 1968.

'Paul said we should do a real song in the studio, to save wasting time. Could I whip one off? I had a few words lying around at home so I brought them in.' Along with Neil and the others, the words were finished in the studio. John told them roughly how he heard the song and they all created the backing between them, just by getting their instruments and playing together, while the film people filmed them.

The words changed, even as they sang them, as Paul misread John's handwriting. One line had 'measured out in news', which came out as 'measured out in you', which they agreed sounded better. There was no reference anywhere to bulldog when they started recording the song. There was a mention of bullfrog, which made Paul, as a joke, start barking, just to make John laugh. They kept the barking in and changed the title. John said the idea of a dog fitted very well. It could be a dog that barks away, worrying at you, trying to pull you, just like the girl in the song. He then picked up a sitar and started singing the words in a Lancashire voice, strumming on the sitar like George Formby, but they couldn't work that in.

Most of John's composing is done at the piano, just doodling over it for hours, letting his mind wander, almost in a trance, while his fingers look for bits of tunes. 'I've got another one here, a few words, I think I got them from an advert – "Cry baby cry, make your mother buy". I've been playing it over on the piano. I've let it go now. It'll come back if I really want it. I do get up from the piano as if I have been in a trance. Sometimes I know I've let a few things slip away, which I could have caught if I'd been wanting something.'

Paul tends to work on whole songs, rather than little bits. But very often songs are left unfinished. And even when they are finished, they are sometimes left around for a long time. 'When I'm Sixty-four' (the age is in honour of Paul's dad) was written in the Cavern days before it popped up and was revised as being ideal for *Sergeant Pepper*.

Sometimes, when they both have a half-finished song, they meld them together, to make one new whole one. The classic example of this was 'A Day In The Life'.

'I'd written the first section and I let Paul hear it. I said to him what we want now is a middle eight bars. He said what about this – "Woke up, Fell out of bed, dragged a comb across my head?" This was a song he'd written on his own, with no idea of what I was working on. I said yeh, that's it.

'Then we thought we needed some sort of connection bit, a growing noise to lead back into the first bit. We wanted to think of a good end and we had to decide what sort of backing and instruments would sound good. Like all our songs, they never become an entity until the very end. They are developed all the time as we go along.

'Often the backing I think of early on never comes off. With "Tomorrow Never Knows" I'd imagined in my head that in the background you would hear thousands of monks chanting. That was impractical, of course, and we did something different. I should have tried to get near my original idea, the monks singing. I realize now that was what it wanted.'

Their long stay in India with Maharishi in the spring of 1968 proved an ideal environment for writing songs – and not Indian ones either. The

strange, foreign environment of Hamburg produced from within themselves a Liverpool sound. (Marshall McLuhan, who fancies himself as a Beatle expert, says this proves his theory that when a new environment goes round an old environment, the old one becomes an art form). India had a similar effect, at least with Paul, making him go back to his boyhood influences, like Hollywood musicals and westerns.

Anyway, when they came back, both John and Paul had written about six or seven songs each, enough for a new LP. They even came back with an idea for its format – the LP would consist of the songs from the sound track of a non-existent musical. It was originally going to be called *Doll's House* – Doll being a girl's name, and her house being a house of pleasure, where all the people in the fictional musical would congregate. But they found that *Doll's House* had already been used as a title.

Paul came back and played his songs, with Jane singing a lala accompaniment, to all the friends who dropped in, especially when they were going to launch into some saga of the things that had gone wrong when he'd been away. 'No, no, don't tell me, listen to this instead.' Then he began a song about Rocky Raccoon checking into his room and finding only a Gideon Bible. At the rhyming of 'Bible' with 'rival' he gave an apologetic grimace. He'd also written a song about junk in a junkyard. He paused in the middle of singing a line about 'broken hearted jubilee mug' to say wasn't 'jubilee' a lovely word to sing. Then he had a song about a girl sitting in the distance with a red umbrella. It had few words but lots of la-las. He enjoyed most of all singing to everyone a mock folksy-American song about it being great to be back in the USSR. He put on a Beach Boy voice for the chorus. Mike, his brother, said why didn't they get the Beach Boys themselves to sing the chorus, but Paul said no. Although Paul still obviously had many gaps to fill in the songs, in singing them to others he was not looking for suggestions, the way John might do, or even to show off. He was just sharing the enjoyment he was having in beginning some new songs, before he'd finished and forgotten them for ever.

It is hard enough for John, Paul and George to get the sound they think they can hear in their heads, but it can be even harder for George Martin. They leave him with bits of tracks that can't sometimes be tied together, or present him with problems that can't be solved, at least at short notice. Just as they thought they could hire Shepperton studios to film *Magical Mystery Tour* at a week's notice, so they still decide overnight that they'd like a 40-piece orchestra for the next evening. George Martin is expected to get it for them.

He is sometimes slightly amused by their lack of musical knowledge. 'They ask for such things as violins to play an F below middle C, which, of course, violins can't do.'

But he approves of and enjoys their method of piling track upon track until they get the sound they like. He's always enjoyed the electronic side of recordings, since the days of trying funny noises for his Peter Sellers records. He thinks that they could often do with 64 tracks, not just four, in order to add on everything they think of.

'I once saw a film of Picasso at work. He starts with an idea, then he overlays it with something else. He still has the same basic idea, but he changes it by putting something else over it. Sometimes the original idea can get obliterated.'

Complications arise when it's not just a matter of adding something to an existing track, but taking bits out of two separate tracks. 'Strawberry Fields' was one of the more complicated creations, in a technical sense. They did the usual basic tracks, then John, playing it at home, decided it wasn't what he'd wanted.

'He'd wanted it as a gentle dreaming song, but he said it had come out too raucous. He said could I do him a new line-up with the strings. So I wrote a new score and we recorded that. But he didn't like it. It still wasn't right. What he would now like was the first half from the early recording, plus the second half of the new recording. Would I put them together for him? I said it was impossible. They were in different keys and different tempos.'

talent for words. Meeting John has made him try for deeper lyrics. But for meeting John, I doubt if Paul could have written "Eleanor Rigby".

'Paul needs an audience, but John doesn't. John is very lazy, unlike Paul. Without Paul he would often give up. John writes for his own amusement. He would be content to play his tunes to Cyn. Paul likes a public.

'John's concept of music is very interesting. I was once playing Ravel's "Daphne and Chloë" to him. He said he couldn't grasp it because the melodic lines were too long. He said he looked upon writing music as doing little bits, which you then join up.'

Both Paul and John do have natural musical talent and originality, but they both have it in different ways. Paul can produce easy, sweet music, like 'Michelle' and 'Yesterday', while John's music is much bumpier and more aggressive, like 'I Am The Walrus'. In a way, it comes out of their personalities. As people, long before they started writing songs, John was always the rough, aggressive one and Paul the sweeter and the smoother.

But perhaps the most interesting thing about them as composers is that despite writing so closely together for over ten years they are still strong individuals. Each has retained his own flavour.

If anything, their individuality has got stronger over the years. In their rock and roll days, both were writing the same sort of songs, but since 'Yesterday', a Paul or a John song is fairly easily identifiable. They've influenced each other, in that Paul has been spurred on to try harder with his lyrics, while John has been spurred on by Paul's keenness and dedication. But they are still very different.

Their music has been constantly analysed and praised and interpreted, right from the beginning in 1963, when *The Times* music man had admired their 'pandiatonic clusters'. They are said to have been influenced by everything, from Negro blues to Magyar dances.

References to drugs have been seen everywhere, once it was known they took drugs. Even the 'help' in Ringo's 'A Little Help From My Friends' was said to mean pot. 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds' was said to stand for LSD, which was just a coincidence. John's son Julian had drawn a picture

for John showing Lucy, a girl in his class, in the sky. In America it was said that 'meeting a man from the motor trade' obviously meant an abortionist. It was in fact a joke reference to their friend Terry Doran, who used to be a car salesman.

They have used drug slang in their songs, but not as much as people have said. Strangely enough, several deliberate slang obscenities have gone unnoticed. In 'Penny Lane', for example, the finger pie referred to is an old Liverpool obscenity, used by Liverpool lads about Liverpool lasses.

They are amused by all the interpretations. John deliberately let all the verbal jokes and stream-of-consciousness nonsense stuff stay as they had come out of his head in 'I Am The Walrus', knowing a lot of people would have fun trying to analyse them.

But whether they are the greatest songwriters in the world today, as some have said, or even better than Schubert, doesn't interest them. They never discuss or try to evaluate or appreciate their music. When forced to talk about it, Paul says simply that it must obviously get better all the time.

'Each time we just want to do something different. After "Please Please Me", we decided we must do something different for the next song. We'd put on one funny hat, so we took it off and looked for another one to put on.

'Why should we ever want to go back? That would be soft. It would be like sticking to grey suits all your life.

'I suppose everybody would like to do this, try something different every time they do any work. We do, because it's just a hobby, that's all. We put our feet up and enjoy it all the time.'

George doesn't think they've done many songs worth talking about yet (his songwriting is discussed separately later).

But now and again George does yearn for the old days. 'I often think it would be nice to play together again. We've never done it since we stopped touring. Perhaps one day we might hire a studio, just to play in for ourselves.'

'They're good songs,' says John, 'but nothing brilliant. I just feel indifferent when I hear them on the radio. I never listen to them properly. Maybe if someone was attacking them, saying they were rotten, then maybe I'd work up some reaction to them.'

They never play their own records, except perhaps when they're about to start a new album. Then they might play the previous one through, just to see where they got up to last time. None of them sings their own songs, either before they've recorded them or afterwards. When John or the others break into a chorus of 'She Loves You', it's as if they're ridiculing a corny song written by someone else.

'We did all the proper listening to them, over and over again, when we wrote them,' says John. 'When it's finished, it doesn't matter any more.'

'I actively dislike hearing bits of them that didn't come out right. There are bits of "Lucy in the Sky" I don't like. Some of the sound in "Mr Kite" isn't right. I like "A Day in the Life", but it's still not half as nice as I thought it was when we were doing it. I suppose we could have worked harder on it. But I couldn't be arsed doing any more.'

'I don't think our old songs are all that different from our new ones, as people are always saying. The words are different, but that's because they're done up differently. The tunes are much the same.'

'I suppose I'm so indifferent about our music because other people take it so seriously. It can be pleasing in a way, but most of it gets my back up.'

'It's nice when people like it, but when they start "appreciating" it, getting great deep things out of it, making a thing of it, then it's a lot of shit. It proves what we've always thought about most sorts of so-called art. It's all a lot of shit. We hated all the shit they wrote and talked about Beethoven and ballet, all kidding themselves it was important. Now it's happening to us. None of it is important. It just takes a few people to get going, and they con themselves into thinking it's important. It all becomes a big con.'

'We're a con as well. We know we're conning them, because we know people want to be conned. They've given us the freedom to con them. Let's stick that in there, we say, that'll start them puzzling. I'm sure all artists do,

when they realize it's a con. I bet Picasso sticks things in. I bet he's been laughing his balls off for the last 80 years.

'It's sad, though. When we're not laughing, we're conning ourselves into thinking we are important. People won't take anything as a laugh. If we said when we wrote "She's Leaving Home" we were actually thinking about bananas, nobody would believe you. They don't want to believe you.

'It is depressing to realize we were right in what we always thought, all these years ago. Beethoven is a con, just like we are now. He was just knocking out a bit of work, that was all.

'The thing is, do Beethoven and these sort of people realize they're a con? Or do they really think they're important? Does the prime minister realize he's just a bloke? I don't know. Perhaps he's taken in by all this pretending to know what he's doing. The drag is he sounds as if he really thinks he knows what's going on, when he doesn't.

'People think the Beatles know what's going on. We don't. We're just doing it. People want to know what the inner meaning of "Mr Kite" was. There wasn't any. I just did it. I shoved a lot of words together, then shoved some noise on. I didn't dig that song when I wrote it. I didn't believe in it when we were recording it. But nobody will believe it. They don't want to. They want it to be important.'



I just sit on the step and look into space and think until it's time to go to bed.'

He doesn't consider this frittering his time away. He frittered it away even more, immediately after they stopped touring, when he never got out of bed till three in the afternoon. Now at least he tries to get up and see a bit of daylight. He says if he's doing nothing he might as well be doing it when there's some sun around.

Even when he is trying to communicate, Cyn, like his aunt Mimi, often finds it difficult to know what he's on about, although he makes more of an effort these days, since Maharishi arrived, taking over from the Buddhism.

'I do find it hard to pass the time of day with people. There's no point in that sort of talk. Now and again I do it, as a game, to see if I can. How are you? What's the time? How are we getting on? Those sort of pointless things.

'The main thing is, there's nothing to talk about any more. I *think* communication all the time like mad, but putting it into words is a waste of time.

'We talk in code to each other as Beatles. We always did that, when we had so many strangers round us on tours. We never really communicated with other people. Now that we don't meet strangers at all, there is no need for any communication. We understand each other. It doesn't matter about the rest.

'Now and again, even though we feel each other, we do have a talking communication session, when we have to say things out loud, or otherwise we forget what we know we've decided amongst ourselves.

'I do daydream a lot. That's in the same class as idle conversation, so I suppose I shouldn't really condemn idle conversation. Just the normal daydreams, what am I going to do today, shall I get up or not, shall I write that song or not, no I'm not going to answer that phone.

'Talking is the slowest form of communicating anyway. Music is much better. We're communicating to the outside world through our music. The

office in America say they listen to *Sergeant Pepper* over and over so that they know what we're thinking in London.

'I do have little spasms of talking. I go and chat to Dot or Anthony, or the gardener, just to see if I can do it. It surprises them.'

The biggest change in John is the decline in his aggression. All his close friends have noticed. They all believe it has been brought about by success.

'It took a long long time,' says Ivan Vaughan, his friend from school. 'Even a couple of years ago, the old animosities were still there, refusing to talk to anybody, being rude, slamming the door. Now he's just as likely to say to people come in, sit down.'

Pete Shotton, the other boyhood friend who opened the Apple Boutique, agrees that all the chips have been smoothed down.

'The good I always saw in him is now at the top. It was only people like schoolmasters who thought he was all bad. No one would ever believe what I saw in him at the time.

'It's great that he's so happy. He spent his whole childhood and all his youth trying all the time to be number one. He had to be the leader at all times, either by fighting everyone or, if they were big, by undermining them by abuse or sarcasm.

'Today John is not trying to prove anything, he doesn't have to be number one, that's why he's happy. You can even see the change. He used to walk like this at school and at the Art College, all hunched up, his eyes and head down, like a scared rabbit, driven into a corner, but ready to lash out. You can see it in all the old pictures of him. Now he can smile in pictures. He's now learning because he wants to learn. At school you are forced to learn because you have to fit into society.

'But John hasn't changed in some things. He's not bigheaded or vain, and he's as generous as ever. When John had a dozen sweets in a bag and there were three of us round him, he'd share them all out, three sweets each. He made me more generous, just by being with him.'

John doesn't see why success should have made him bigheaded or changed him in any way. Apart from thinking that success is meaningless, he also thinks anybody can do it, which is what Paul also thinks.

Both he and Paul feel that the most important thing about success is willpower. 'Everyone can be a success. If you keep saying that enough times to yourself you can be. We're no better than anybody else. We're all the same. We're as good as Beethoven. Everyone's the same inside.

'You need the desire and the right circumstances, but it's nothing to do with talent, or with training or education. You get primitive painters, and writers, don't you? Nobody told them how to do it. They told themselves they could do it and just did it.

'What's talent? I don't know. Are you born with it, do you discover you have it later on? The basic talent is believing you can do something. Me and Paul were always drawing, but George wouldn't even try because he said he couldn't draw. It took us a long time to persuade him anyone could draw. Now he's drawing all the time. And he's getting better.

'We knew that the GCE wasn't the opening to anything. We could have ground through all that and gone further, but not for me. I believed something was going to happen which I'd have to get through. And I knew it wasn't GCE.

'Up to the age of 15 I was no different from any other little cunt of 15. Then I decided I'd write a little song, and I did. But it didn't make me any different. That's a load of crap that I discovered a talent. I just did it. I've no talent, except a talent for being happy or a talent for skiving.

'Someone wants to bust open this whole talent myth, wise everybody up. Politicians have no talent. It's all a con.

'Perhaps my guru will tell me what my real talent is, something else that I really should be doing.

'I never felt any responsibility, being a so-called idol. It's wrong of people to expect it. What they are doing is putting their responsibilities on us, as Paul said to the newspapers when he admitted taking LSD. If they were

John most of all can't be without the other three for very long, which is hard luck on Cyn. He doesn't mean it in any way nastily, as he doesn't mean not talking to her or going into a semi-trance to be an insult to her. That's just him, which she has to accept.

'If I am on my own for three days, doing nothing, I almost leave myself completely. I'm just not here. Cyn doesn't realize it. I'm up there watching myself, or I'm at the back of my head. I can see my hands and realize they're moving, but it's a robot who's doing it.

'Ringo understands it. I can discuss it with him. I have to see the others to see myself. I realize then there is someone else like me, so it's satisfying and reassuring. It's frightening really, when it gets too bad. I have to see them to establish contact with myself again and come down.

'Sometimes I don't come down. We were recording the other night and I just wasn't there. Neither was Paul. We were like two robots, going through the motions.

'We do need each other a lot. When we used to meet again after an interval we always used to be embarrassed about touching each other. We'd do an elaborate hand shake, just to hide the embarrassment. Or we did mad dances. Then we got to hugging each other. Now we do the Buddhist bit, arms around. It's just saying hello, that's all.'

Now and again he gets the desire to go off somewhere, with Cyn and Julian, and of course the Beatles as well. The Greek island idea, which John was particularly keen on, greatly appealed to him at the time. 'We're all going to live there, perhaps for ever, just coming home for visits. Or it might just be six months a year. It'll be fantastic, all on our own on this island. There's some little houses which we'll do up and knock together and live sort of communally.

'I'm not worried about the political situation in Greece, as long as it doesn't affect us. I don't care if the government is all fascist, or communist. I don't care. They're all as bad as here, worse most of them. I've seen England and the USA, and I don't care for either of their governments. They're all the same. Look what they do here. They stopped Radio Caroline

and tried to put the Stones away, while they're spending billions on nuclear armaments and the place is full of US bases that no one knows about. They're all over North Wales.'

But the Greek idea came to nothing, as did other mad ideas John's had from time to time in the last two years. One day he was all set to go to India in his caravan, though the caravan doesn't look strong enough to take him into Weybridge. He and Cyn and Julian were going to live inside it, so he said, while Anthony, his chauffeur, pulled them in the Rolls. Another idea was to go off and live on an island off the coast of Ireland. He did buy the island. 'No, I can't remember where. Just somewhere off Ireland.'

But the Greek idea was discussed for many weeks. It even got to the stage of trying to work out what to do about Julian and his schooling.

John has some strong theories about the sort of schooling he wants Julian to have, but he usually forgets about them when he's contemplating six months on a deserted Greek island.

'He could go to a school in Greece,' he told Cyn, who was obviously much more realistic about the problem than John. 'What's wrong with that? He'd just spend six months of the year there and the rest here at his English school. These little Greek village schools are very good, you know. Why can't Julian go along with them? He'll soon pick up the language.'

Cynthia said the chopping and changing around wouldn't do him any good. John then thought of sending him to the English school in Athens, where all the British diplomats and others send their kids. Cyn pointed out that would mean him boarding in Athens. They were both against that. Neither wants him to go away to boarding school.

John would prefer a council school, if possible. He'd just found out that the local nursery school Julian was going to wasn't a council one, as he'd thought. Cynthia explained to him that there wasn't a council nursery school she could get him into, that was why she'd done it.

'I don't know,' said John. 'I suppose the fee-paying schools are no worse than the others. As long as he's happy. What does it matter if you have to pay? But I definitely won't send him to a boarding school. I wouldn't send

him to Eton. They'd teach him to believe all that shit if he went to Eton. Perhaps a Buddhist school, if there is one. Or a day school, a progressive one, not far from Weybridge, that's all we want.

'We've been thinking of Julian's schooling for some time. I even got a book out about all the schools in England. All they went on about was that they could offer football and tennis. Ridiculous, isn't it? They've got all their priorities wrong. He's got to be taught to be aware of other people, that's all. He doesn't want to know how Sir Francis Drake killed all the Spaniards and that Britain invented television and all that shit fool nationalistic stuff. He wants to know how to live in this world.

'If we do go abroad, then I suppose it'll have to be a tutor, but we'll have to make sure there are other kids for him to play with. I had a happy childhood. I liked being at school. It was just that the teachers hated me and I hated teachers. But I liked school. When we're all talking about our memories, it's sometimes us as the Beatles, but more often it's remembering about our school days.

'I don't think Julian could go to the sort of school I went to. I have to admit a council school might be tough for him now, thanks to me. He'd be laughed at. Millionaire pop singer's son. They'd all point at him. At least that wouldn't matter so much in a fee-paying school, where all they think about is money.'

Cyn is stronger than she looks. She's been through it all before and knows where she is. She understands John's often apparent lack of consideration. He can be selfish, but not deliberately, just without thinking.

All the rows they had in their early Liverpool days are long since over. They are very happy, though she still says that but for her becoming pregnant, they would probably never have married. John agrees.

'John never thought of settling down in any way, just as he never thought of taking a proper job. If I hadn't got pregnant and then married, we would just have drifted apart as he started touring round the world. I would have stuck in at the Art College and probably become a teacher. But for Julian, it would never have happened. It kept us tied together.'

She doesn't think any such thing as love would have kept them going if they'd been so far apart. 'His love was for the Beatles. Without the baby he would just have gone off with the Beatles for ever.'

They both say they are glad the baby did happen, keeping them together. They also think it was meant to happen. It was fate. John, particularly, believes in fate.

Cyn now and again would like to try something new, to have a job, perhaps use her art college training in some way. She and Pattie, George's wife, discussed the idea once of opening a boutique together in Esher, but it never came to anything.

'I am becoming a bit frustrated. I don't really want to have another child at the moment, now that we can get around so much. I know that might mean leaving it too late and I would never want another.'

'But I'm frustrated really, because I'd like something to *do*. I do a bit of painting and dressmaking, but I often think I'd like a job. Not now, but later on. I've never had a job. I might do some designing, or perhaps teaching.'

She teases him about his dependence on the Beatles, and is obviously hurt by it sometimes.

'I do find I suggest something and he just ignores it at the time, or says it's wrong. Then a few weeks later Ringo suggests the same thing and he's all for it. But I don't worry. I can't put it into words, but I feel strong. It's a sense. I understand things.'

'What I would like is a holiday on our own, without the Beatles. Just John, Julian and me.'

'You what?' said John, smiling. 'Not even with our Beatle buddies?'

'Yes, John. Don't you remember we were talking about it last week?'

'What did we say?'

'We said the three of us could just go off somewhere, not with your buddies.'

'But it's nice to have your mates around.'

'That really offends me. He does think it's not enough just to go with his family.'

He smiled at her. She shook her head at him.

'They seem to need you less than you need them,' she said.

Before he could reply to this one she got in with an example she'd obviously had all ready.

'George went off to Los Angeles, just with Pattie, didn't he? *He* didn't need to get everyone to go with him.'

John smiled. He agreed it did seem to be true. 'I did try to go my own way after we stopped touring. I had a few good laughs and games of monopoly on my film, but it didn't work. I was never so glad to see the others. Seeing them made me feel normal again.' Cyn looked soulfully at him.

'OK, I know, we'll all retire to a little cottage on a cliff in Cornwall, all right?'

'No, but I can't retire. I've got these bloody songs to write. I have to work, to justify living.'



physical body as well. He often moans at what people write about him, yet he gives interviews. He should know the consequences, after all these years. He is upset by the mad rush to buy and sell Beatle memorabilia, yet he himself has bid at Sotheby's. (He wanted a postcard that he had sent to John, but someone else outbid him.) Both he and George have, in fact, contributed to the present craze for Beatle artefacts, by putting out *more* material, such as Paul's book of drawings and George's book containing the originals of his songs.

Oh, what a complicated man he is, what convolutions, what self-justifications, what fears, how vulnerable he is. How could we, in the 1960s, have taken Paul for a simple, lovable soul, or accepted George as a quiet little boy? In the end, I think both of them are much harder to explain and understand than John. He was so much up front, to the point of brutality, quick to reveal himself and his opinions. Paul and George have so many layers. They both get upset when outsiders think they know them, when they are described in black-and-white terms, which of course is never completely true of any of us.

Not long after John's death, I had some strange conversations with Paul. He seemed so upset by so many things, not least of all John's death. This was in May 1981, and I jotted down in a diary some of the things he told me.

John's death had grown into a sort of cult, with instant books already appearing, and the papers were still full of it. Many people, in praising John, were at the same time putting down Paul, or so it appeared. He felt he had already been criticized in a book just out written by Philip Norman, formerly a colleague of mine on the *Sunday Times*. I had helped him, and let him see all my files, telling him things like Mimi's phone number, when he had come to talk to me, saying he was writing a book about the 1960s as a whole. I didn't know then it was going to be a Beatles biography. None of the Beatles had in fact given him any interviews for his book, which was subtitled 'The True Story of the Beatles'.

Paul rang me on 3 May 1981, and went on for over an hour, all about how hurt he was. He had already been moaning at length to my wife, as I was

out walking on Hampstead Heath when he first rang. He said he was fed up with all these people going on about him and John and getting it all wrong. Only he knew the truth. It wasn't anything like the things being said.

Paul criticized me, for having gone on some TV news programme after John's death. In my tribute to him, I said that John was more the hard man, with the cutting edge, while Paul was softer and more melodic.

But what had really got him upset that day was an interview with Yoko, in which Yoko was quoted as saying that Paul had hurt John more than any other person. Paul thought they were some of the cruellest words he had ever read.

'No one ever goes on about the times John hurt *me*,' said Paul. 'When he called my music Muzak. People keep on saying I hurt him, but where's the examples, when did I do it? No one ever says. It's just always the same, blaming me. Could I have hurt John *more* than anyone in the world? More than the person who ran down Julia in his car?'

'We were always in competition. I wrote "Penny Lane", so he wrote "Strawberry Fields". That was how it was. But that was in compositions. I can't understand why Yoko is saying this. The last time I spoke to her she was great. She told me she and John had just been playing one of my albums and had cried.'

So why don't you ring her up, I suggested, and find out if she really made that remark?

'I'm not ringing her up on that. It's too trivial. It's not the time. I wouldn't just ring up on that.'

What did you think then might have hurt John?

'There's only one incident I can think of that John has mentioned publicly. It was when I went off with Ringo and did "Why Don't We Do It In The Road". It wasn't a deliberate thing. John and George were tied up finishing something and me and Ringo were free, just hanging around, so I said to Ringo let's go and do this.

'I did hear him some time later singing it. He liked the song and I suppose he'd wanted to do it with me. It was a very John sort of song anyway. That's why he liked it, I suppose. It was very John, the idea of it, not me. I wrote it as a ricochet off John.

'Perhaps I have hurt people by default. I never realized at the time John would mind. At Ringo's wedding [the previous week] Neil happened to say to me that Mimi was upset I'd never contacted her after John's death. I'd never even thought of it. I don't know Mimi. I probably haven't seen her for about 20 years, since Menlove Avenue. I was just the little kid that hung around with John. We didn't get into her house.

'Anyway, I rang her up, in case she really was upset, and apologized for not ringing, saying I hadn't got her phone number, and she was terrific and we had a good chat. We discussed Philip Norman's book and she didn't like it either. She said I should write and complain. I told her I'd been writing letters constantly, but I'd torn them all up. She said I should do something about it, to stop this sort of thing.

'''In an earthquake you get many different versions of what happened by all the people that saw it. And they're all true.' That's what I wrote in one letter. But how can you get the full story from someone who *wasn't* there? But I tore that up as well.

'Nobody knows how much I *helped* John. Me and Linda went to California and talked him out of his so-called lost weekend, when he was full of drugs. We told him to go back to Yoko and not long after he did. I went all the way to LA to see the bastard. He never gave me an inch, but he took so many yards and feet.

'He always suspected me. He accused me of scheming to buy over Northern Songs without telling him. I was thinking of something to invest in, and Peter Brown said what about Northern Songs, invest in yourself, so I bought a few shares, about 1,000 I think. John went mad, suspecting some plot. Then he bought some. He was always thinking I was cunning and devious. That's my reputation, someone's who's charming, but a clever lad.

'It happened the other day at Ringo's wedding. I was saying to Cilla [Black] that I liked Bobby [her husband]. That's all I said. Bobby's a nice bloke. Ah, but what do you *really* think, Paul? You don't mean that, do you, you're getting at something? I was being absolutely straight. But she couldn't believe it. No one ever does. They think I'm calculating all the time.

'I do stand back at times, unlike John. I look ahead. I'm careful. John would go for the free guitar and just accept it straight away, in a mad rush. I would stand back and think, but what's this bloke really after, what will it mean? I was always the one that told Klein to put money away for tax.

'I don't *like* being the careful one. I'd rather be immediate like John. He was all action. John was always the loudest in any crowd. He had the loudest voice. He was the cock who crowed the loudest. Me and George used to call him the cockerel in the studio. I was never out to screw him, never. He could be a manoeuvring swine, which no one ever realized. Now, since his death, he's become Martin Luther Lennon. But that really wasn't him either. He wasn't some sort of holy saint. He was still really a debunker.

'For ten years together he took my songs apart. He was paranoiac about my songs. We had great screaming sessions about them.

'In the beginning he was a sort of fairground hero. He was the big lad riding the dodgems and we thought he was great. We were younger, me and George, and that mattered. It was teenage hero worship. I've often said how my first impression of him was his boozy breath all over me – but that was just a cute story. That was me being cute. It was true, but only an eighth of the truth. I just used to say that later when people asked me for my first memory of John. My first reaction was very simple – that he was great, that he was a great bloke, and a great singer. My *really* first impression was that it was amazing how he was making up the words.

'He was singing "Come Go With Me to the Penitentiary" and he didn't know *one* of the words. He was making up every one as he went along. I thought it was great.

'He became so jealous in the end. You know he wouldn't let me even touch his baby. He got really crazy with jealousy at times. I suppose I've inherited some of that ...

'It's true I didn't care for Stu, but I wasn't against him personally. He just couldn't play bass. That was all there was to it. I had a functional, ambitious-for-the-group sort of objection to him. He knew he couldn't play. I was the one who told him to keep his back to the audience. I didn't want him out to get the bass job. Stu himself left us, to stay on in Hamburg. John asked George first to play bass. I've checked that with George the other day. He remembers it well. George refused. So he asked me. I got lumbered with playing bass. It wasn't my scheme.

'It was the same with Pete Best. I wasn't jealous of him, because he was handsome. He just couldn't play. Ringo was so much better. We wanted him out for that reason.

'The idea of Brian's murder is crazy, but all that merchandising trouble is true. We got screwed for millions, but in the end it wasn't worth suing everybody. We'd never get it all back and it would take such time. We knew most of them would still in the end get away with it. It was all Brian's fault. He was green. I always said that about Brian. Green.

'We knew he was gay, but it didn't matter. For a while he didn't know that we knew, and we pretended it that way. It didn't matter. We never discussed it with him. He kept it very private. It didn't matter. We might make faces at each other behind his back, you know if someone was dressed up in drag. We'd try to catch Brian's eye, to see if he was blushing. But we didn't say anything. It was all affectionate. As for that drawing with Brian in the middle of a row of kids in the Cavern, *salivating*. That is not true. I've heard of artistic licence, but that's ridiculous. The other drawings were meant to be true, as they started with one based on a photograph, so you took this as being true. It's just part of trying to build up Brian's gay thing. He *never* sat in the Cavern. He never mixed anyway. He just stood at the very back, so no one could see him or knew he was there. There was no salivating.

'I idolized John. He was the big guy in the chip shop. I was the little guy. As I matured and grew up, I started sharing in things with him. I got up to

his level. I wrote songs as he did and sometimes they were as good as his. We grew to be equals. It made him insecure. He always was, really. He was insecure with women. You know, he told me when he first met Yoko not to make a play for her.

'I saw somewhere that he says he helped on "Eleanor Rigby". Yeh. About half a line. He also forgot completely that I wrote the tune for "In My Life". That was my tune. But perhaps he just made a mistake on that. Forgot.

'I understood what happened when he met Yoko. He had to clear the decks of his old emotions. He went through all his old affairs, confessed them all. Me and Linda did that when we first met. You prove how much you love someone by confessing all the old stuff. John's method was to slag me off.

'I've never come at him, not at all, but I can't hide my anger about all the things he said at the time, about the Muzak, about me singing like Englebert Humperdinck ...

'If we had to start listing all the times when *he* hurt me. Doing that one little song on my own, compared with what he said about *me* ...

'When you think about it, I've done nothing really to him, compared with that. Anyway, he did the same with "Revolution 9". He went off and made that without me. No one ever says all that. John is now the nice guy and I'm the bastard. It gets repeated all the time.'

But until John's death, I said, the general image was that you were the nice guy and that John was the bastard. Neither of course was true, not completely. Things will soon shake down. Don't worry. Keep cool.

'But people are printing *facts* about me and John. They're *not* facts. But it will go down in the records. It will become part of history. It will be there for always. People will believe it all.

'Anyway, me, George and Ringo have promised to be nice guys to each other from now on. When we meet and talk now I never mention Apple. I've learned that. Any mention of Apple just leads to rows and slagging off ...

'I apparently hurt George Martin by default as well. I didn't know that till I read his book. I didn't let him do "She's Leaving Home". I rang him up, but he was busy, couldn't make it for two days, or two weeks or something, so I thought what the hell, if he can't fit me in, I'll get someone else. I was hurt at the time, which was why I got someone else. Now he says I deliberately hurt him. Well, if that's the only hurt I've done him ...

'John and I were really army buddies. That's what it was like really. I realize now we never got to the bottom of each other's souls. We didn't know the truth. Some fathers turn out to hate their sons. You never know.

'At Ringo's wedding, I happened to go to the toilet, and I met Ringo there, at the same time, just the two of us. He said there were two times in his life in which I had done him in. Then he said that he'd done himself in *three* times. I happened to be spitting something out, and by chance the spit fell on his jacket. I said there you go, now I've done you three times. We're equal. I laughed it off. It was all affectionate. It wasn't a row. It wasn't slagging off. He just suddenly said it, and we moved on. But *now*, I keep thinking all the time, what are the two times that Ringo thinks I put him down ...?

'I suppose we all do that. We never publicly come out with little hurts. George told me the other day of a time I'd hurt him. He's done worse, I think, like when he said he would never play bass with me again.

'I was very upset when they said I was just trying to bring in Lee Eastman, because he's my in-law. In the end, they brought in Klein. As if I'd just bring in a member of the family, for no other reason. They'd known me 20 years, yet they thought that. I couldn't believe it. John said, "*Magical Mystery Tour* was just a big ego trip for Paul." God! It was for their sake, to keep us together, keep us going, give us something new to do.

'Legally, we were mugs. I still have Lee Eastman, and he's made a fortune. For me. I was forced to sue the Beatles, in order to prove what I knew. I didn't want to. I went up to Scotland and agonized for three months, cut myself off, before I decided it was the only way. To sue the Beatles. It was a terrible decision.

'I still get slagged off for it. In the history books, I'm still the one who broke up the Beatles.

'I didn't hate John. People said to me when he came out with those things on his record about me, you must hate him, but I didn't. I don't. We were once having a right slagging session and I remember how he took off his granny glasses. I can still see him. He put them down and said, "It's only me, Paul." Then he put them back on again, and we continued slagging ... That phrase keeps coming back to me all the time. "It's only me." It's become a mantra in my mind.

'I have some juicy stuff I could tell about John. But I wouldn't. Not when Yoko's alive, or Cynthia. John would. He would grab, go for the action, say the first thing in his head. We admired him for that. It was honesty, but it could hurt. And it wasn't really all *that* honest. He *knew* he could hurt. He could be wicked. But I'm always sensible. That's me. I would never say the things he said.

'No one else knows the truth, such as it is, that's the trouble. I was talking to Neil the other day, having a laugh and remembering some incident, a funny story. We remembered everything exactly, what we said, what I was wearing, that someone had a fan. We were absolutely exact on 75 per cent of the story, except on one vital thing. I said it took place in Piccadilly and Neil said it was Savile Row. I can see it so clearly, every detail as it happened – and so can Neil, yet it's in different places.

'Until I was about 30, I thought the world was an exact place. Now I know that life just splutters along. John knew that. He was the great debunker. He'd be debunking all his death thing now.

'I can't really remember the 1960s anyway. I went through it in a sort of purple haze. The other day we were at a place, me and Linda, and this gorgeous blonde came up to me and flung her arms round my neck. "Remember me, Paul?" I said hmm, yeh, now, let me see, but I had no knowledge of ever seeing her before. "But Paul, we made love in LA ..."
"Oh," I said. "Really. Meet the wife. This is Linda ... 'Scuse us, we'll have to go ..."

'It's happened before, of course. It was before I was married. It can be dodgy, but Linda's a good skin.'

I suggested that he should write it all down, or tape it, record in his words what he thinks was the relationship with John, exorcise it once and for all, then stick it in a drawer and forget it.

'I might. I did that after being in jail. I've written my feelings about that. I wasn't allowed pencil and paper in jail, and it was all I wanted, so when I came home I wrote it straight out. I don't know what to do with it. I don't want that usual publishing scene. It's just for me. It's about 20,000 words. Linda and one or two other people have read it and think it's good. I got a private printer, just to print for me one copy, one only. I've got it. I just wanted a plain white cover and, inside, just black words on white paper. On cheap white paper. I wanted it like an Olympia press book. Just a cheap little thing. It fits in the pocket, just six inches by about four. I did for a time think of publishing a few and selling them off the back of a barrow. Telling no one, just suddenly selling them in the street, for a few bob. But I don't want a big thing. Then I heard that some pop musician had already done this, so I didn't want it to look like copying. So I just have the one copy. I'll let you read it sometime. Tell me what you think.

'As for me and John, yeh, I might write it down. You know I helped him with his first book. That's never been mentioned by anyone. Not by John anyway ...'

As for the other characters in the Beatle drama, Neil Aspinall, their roadie, went on to be an executive in Apple and produced the *Let It Be* film. He's still there, though Apple these days seems to have less to do and produce. He is married with five children. Mal Evans, on the other hand, who always seemed so relaxed and contented, compared with the rather nervy Neil, ended his life in tragedy. He'd left his wife and family and had moved to America when he was shot in an incident with the police in Los Angeles in 1976. Paul's father Jim had also died, so has John's father Fred, and George's mum, Louise. Ivan Vaughan, the boy who first brought John and